

Westminster Abbey

J. B. Morgan



THE WEST END, SHEWING THE WREN TOWERS.

Westminster Abbey :

THE STORY OF
OUR NATIONAL CHURCH.

BY

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Westminster Abbey:

THE STORY OF OUR NATIONAL CHURCH.

Every one of us has it in his power to increase the glory, to strengthen the stability, to insure the perpetuity of this Abbey. That is the best memorial we can raise, that is the best service we can render, to all those, dead or living, who have loved, or who still love, this holy and beautiful house, wherein our fathers worshipped in the generations of the past, and wherein, if we be but true to its glorious mission, our children and our children's children shall worship in the generations that are yet to come."—Dean Stanley on the death of Sir Gilbert Scott, 6th April, 1878.

It savours of the irreligious, in these hours of open conviction and plain eventful fact, to touch upon the delightful fictions that cloud the early days of our oldest fabrics. For nearly thirteen hundred years a Church of some character has stood upon the spot where the present Abbey buildings of Westminster now stand. Legendary lore and most modern men tell of the day when one Sebert, King of the East Saxons, builded himself a Church on *Thorney Island*, a peat waste—on the banks of the Thames—cut off by the "Eye" brook, which emptied itself into the river somewhere on the near west side of the Houses of Parliament, and by (what one historian unblushingly terms) an open sewer, which we may take to have been a ditch. The legend goes that Sebert ordered Melitus, the Bishop of London, to perform the ceremony of consecration, but that on the previous night, the eve of that solemn function, Edric, a fisherman, was accosted by a stranger who sought ferry across the Thames. Edric was invited to moor his boat and attend the stranger to the Church, and there he witnessed such a sight as surely no mortal eyes have since encountered. It was St. Peter, determined to be beforehand in the ceremony of consecration; and on the morrow Edric had such a story of rushing wings and lights and holy incense to tell of, that had the floor not been covered with the drippings of the angels'

candles, heaven only knows what would have happened to the affrighted fisherman. Nothing, of course, can be derived from these interesting legends which go down in our history, century after century, for the want of one clear item of fact; yet it may safely be granted that both this ancient Church, dedicated to St. Peter—of which not a fragment has come down to us—and the one originally dedicated to St. Paul and erected on Ludgate Hill at the same time, were among the earliest works of the Christian converts in Britain.

THE CONFESSOR'S CHURCH.

Immediately after Sebert's death, his sons began to neglect the sacred edifice; eventually the Danes ruthlessly desecrated the place, and for several centuries the "whole thing remained a monument of the sacrilegious fury of the times." When, however, King Ethelred and his queen, the beautiful Norman princess Emma, had to seek refuge in Normandy from the Danes, their son Edward was brought up in the Norman Court, and for five and twenty years he busied himself in the erection of those fine ecclesiastical works in Caen, which to this day are examples we are glad to study. It was not until 1041 that Edward (in after years to be known to history and all men as the Confessor) determined to return to England and establish himself upon the throne of his fathers, and in 1049 he commenced the rebuilding of the Church of St. Peter, that had laid in ruin so long. Sixteen years he spent in his task of reconstructing the royal fane and in establishing a Benedictine Monastery in connection with it.

Like its predecessor, we know very little about the Confessor's Abbey, except that it was the first cruciform Church built in England. And it must have been a noble one, for Matthew Paris, writing in the thirteenth century upon the death of the Confessor, said that he was "buried in the Church

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THE ABBEY FROM DEAN'S YARD.

DRAWN BY HERBERT RAILTON.

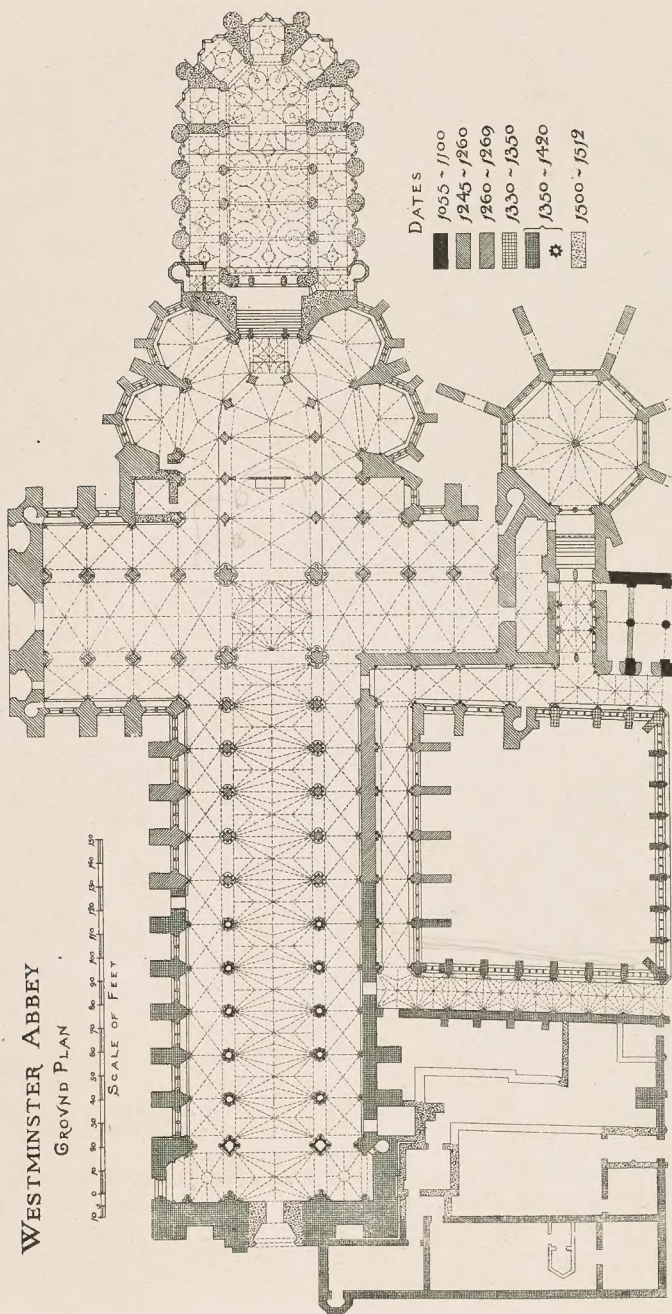
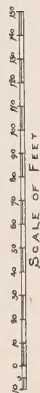
which he had constructed in that mode of composition from which many of those afterwards constructing Churches, taking example, had emulated in its costly expenditure." Sir Gilbert Scott was "much disposed to think" that the Confessor's Church may have been nearly or quite as large in its elementary scale as the present structure. In proof of this, there can be no doubt that his Choir, for a time, co-existed with the present Nave and agreed with it in elementary scale. Again, there is no reason to believe that the Choir of Westminster Abbey was rebuilt between the days of Edward and those of Henry III., which would have been inevitable had its scale been diminutive; and, if it did exist through that period, we have full proof that it was as long as the present eastern arm of the Abbey, from the fact of the remains of his Dormitory abutting against it in the usual way, while the eastward extension of the old Church is certainly defined by the fact that Henry constructed his Lady Chapel against it some years before

he began the rebuilding of the Church itself. The dimensions of the old Nave are less easy of conjecture, except by inference from the site of the Refectory and by the fact that Cloisters extended to within three bays of the existing western Towers. As Cloisters rarely reached to the full extent of the Nave, it suggests the probability that the old Nave did not fall much short of the present one. The



THE EAST END SHEWING HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY GROUND PLAN



DATES
1035 - 1100
1245 - 1260
1260 - 1269
1330 - 1350
1350 - 1420
1500 - 1512

DRAWN BY J. T. MICKLETHWAITE, F.S.A.

A CHRONOLOGICAL PLAN OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

Westminster Abbey.

Confessor must, therefore, have erected a beautiful and wonderful pile, but all that remains of it—in addition to various “rich fragments” that were discovered under the Nave floor some fifty years back—are the sub-structure of the Dormitory running southwards from the south Transept, and the Chapel of the Pyx.

THE PRESENT CHURCH.

The founding of the present Abbey Church was entirely due to Henry III., one of England's most enlightened monarchs. Henry was passionately fond of ritual, had a keen artistic sense, and desired nothing better than to create a right royal burying place, and a Church that should be incomparable for its beauty. For fifty years out of the fifty-six he occupied the throne, he diligently attended to his task, finishing the Lady Chapel, the entire east end of the Church, the Confessor's shrine behind the high Altar, the Transepts—including the first bay westward from the crossing, the Chapter House and the Chapel of St. Faith.*

Edward I. constructed the first four bays of the Nave, and the corresponding bays in the north walk of the Cloisters. The next six bays were added by various Prelates during the reigns of Edward II. and III., Abbot Litlington completing the Nave about 1385 A.D., by adding the last bay, and building the lower portions of the western Towers. Abbot Litlington was also responsible for the Refectory on the Confessor's sub-structure previously referred to, the Abbot's House, Jerusalem Chamber, the whole of the west and the greater portion of the south walks of the Cloisters, and the Solomon Porch in front of the north Transept portal. Henry V. erected the Shrine over the Ambulatory. Abbot Estney, in 1498, was responsible for the great west window, and Henry VII. it was who pulled down the Lady Chapel of Henry III., and built thereon that remarkable edifice which is, and always will be, one of the wonders of the Architectural world.

HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL.

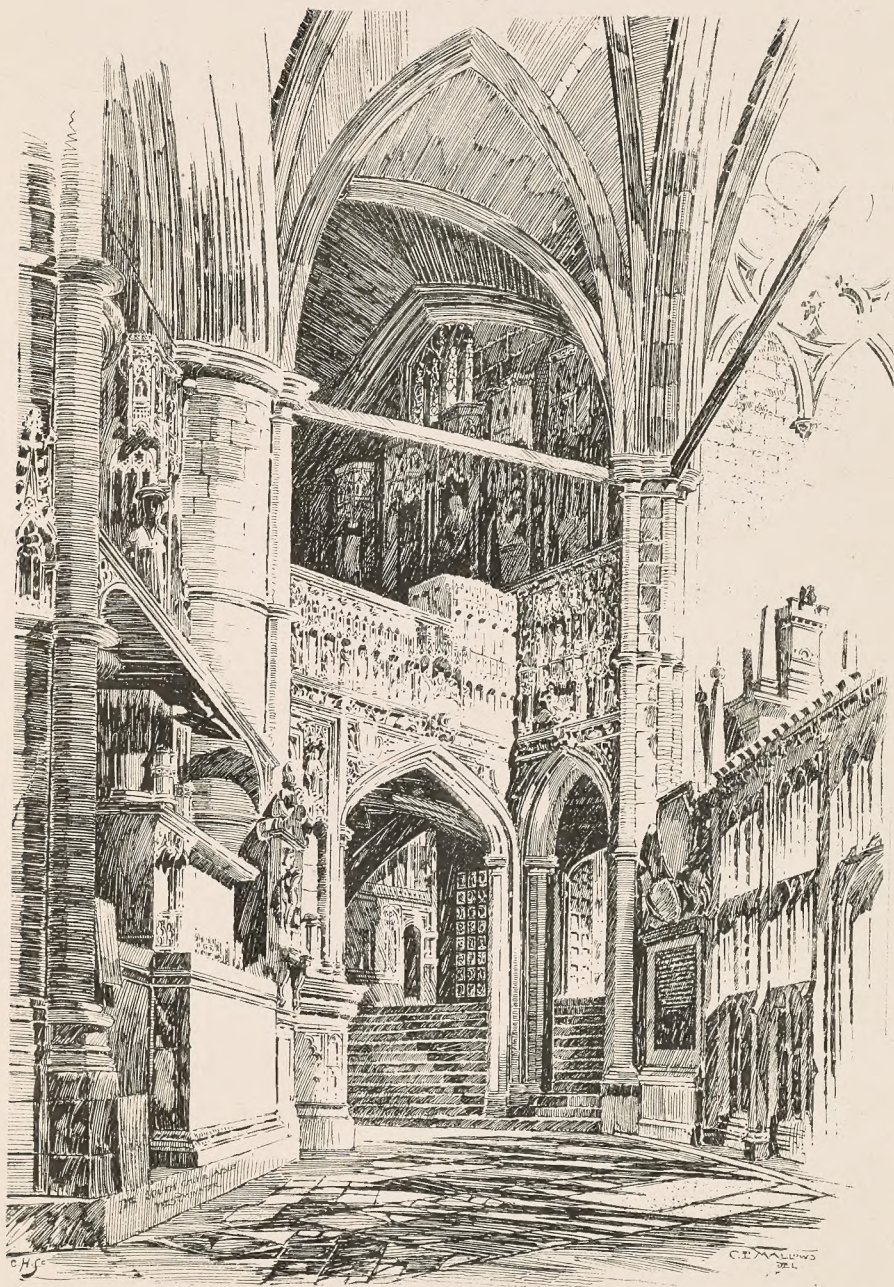
King Henry commenced his immortal work in the year 1502. Leland called it “the miracle of the World,” and it remains to this day the finest and the most sumptuous Perpendicular building in England. The king meant it to be his Chantry as well as his tomb, and almost a second Abbey was needed for the monks who were to sing in their stalls “as long as the World shall endure.”

Scott says that “the Chapel is the richest specimen in existence of that peculiarly English style commonly known as Tudor. It is too much the fashion to

depreciate and run down this style because it belongs to the latest period of Gothic art, and naturally, therefore, wants the boldness and vigour of the early styles; but it is far from being devoid of merit, and the strong hold which it has on the popular mind, to which it is always more attractive than the more severe earlier style, is itself a proof of merit. We may consider the elaborate ornament as very much overdone to the eye of a more pure taste, but there is no denying that it has great richness of effect, and for the vaulting, that fan tracery vaulting is the highest development of skill in construction, not only in the Architect but in the workman.”

But in his apology for Tudor Architecture, while enlarging upon richness of effect and skill in construction, he misses a point which must have forced itself upon the hearts and minds of ecclesiasts. Not all the fretted stone, nor all the carven pendants, poised fairy-like, over-head, can compensate for the loss of that quiet dignity and reverence-compelling style which is known as Early English, a style which has, perhaps, no better exponent than the glorious Choir and Nave, the tall and slender Transepts, of this very Abbey. Those portions of the building have power to beget reverence in the most sullen: in this Chapel of Henry VII., while you marvel at the design and at the engineering skill which went towards rearing it, prayer and praise do not occupy your thoughts so much as wonderment at the infinite cost and labour that its building and its furnishing must have entailed. That is the very point: decoration and furnishing—the marvellous wealth of stone carving, the profligacy of pinnaced stall-work and joinery, obscure the purely architectural and constructional character, and the devotional intention, of the Chapel, and give you earnestly to think that this fine flower of the Tudor age, this veritable Palace of Art, is more truly palatial than ecclesiological. But the first entrance into Henry VII.'s Chapel is an event not to be forgotten in a lifetime. Passing the darkened porch, shown in our illustration, and through those wonderful brazen gates that Scott describes so thoroughly in his “Gleanings,” the whole richness of the interior becomes apparent at a glance. Did ever arches spring up with such fairy grace, or guide the entranced eye to a more surpassingly beautiful and almost miraculous roof? where, in the words of Washington Irving, “stone seems, by the cunning labours of the chisel, to have been robbed of its weight and density, suspended aloft as if by magic, and the fretted roof achieved with the wonderful minuteness and airy security of a cobweb.” There must have been something truly magnificent in a King who could determine on the erection of such a Temple; select the genius that could erect it, and then give such unlimited scope

* This portion of the work and all succeeding additions are clearly defined on Mr. Micklethwaite's chronological plan here reproduced, but there appears to be some discrepancy in his dating of the work. Henry III. clearly had not completed the Transepts so early as 1260, nor had the four succeeding bays of the Nave and the north walk of the Cloisters been begun in 1269, in which year Mr. Micklethwaite records them as being completed. Our own personal research puts these works at quite ten years later.—J. D. M.]



THE SOUTH CHOIR AISLE, SHEWING THE
ENTRANCE TO HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL.

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to the development of its loftiest and most daring imaginings. And the artist or the architect is *unknown*.

The desire of fame, which is so proverbially a characteristic of high minds, seems to be little felt by the highest. In the breasts of the great men who have bequeathed to this country its most precious Architectural wealth we find no traces whatever of its existence. A few words deeply cut on a stone would have made their names immortal, but none of the artist-constructors of Henry VII.'s Chapel seem to have thought it worth the trouble. There is some reason to believe that the Prior of St. Bartholomew's, Smithfield, was the guiding spirit of the place, for Henry, in his will, calls him the "Master of the Works," but beyond that nothing is definite.

To the tomb itself special attention is desirable. Having safely secured his soul, Henry made suitable provision for his body. Of his burial he said but little further than to charge his executors to perform it with a "special respect and consideration to the laud and praising of God, the wealth of our soul, and somewhat to our dignity royal, eschewing always damnable pomp and outrageous superfluities." And yet he proceeded to arrange for the construction of a tomb, which for richness, if not for pompousness, is not surpassed in the kingdom. Pietro Torregiano, a Florentine, was selected to do the work. In early life Pietro had been a fellow student with Michael Angelo, and he came to England with a great reputation. The tomb consists of a base of "touch," a basaltic stone not unlike black marble, on which repose the effigies of the King and his Consort, sculptured in a style of great simplicity and adherence to nature; the whole is adorned with pilasters, relievos, rose-branches—depicting the adhesion of the two rival houses—and graven "tabernacles," as Henry called them in his will, of his patron saints; viz., the Virgin and Saviour and St. Michael, St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, St. George and St. Anthony, on the south side, and St. Mary Magdalen and St. Barbara, St. Christopher and St. Anne, Edward the Confessor and John, and lastly, St. Vincent, on the north, all of copper and gilt. Torregiano was six years engaged in the work, and received for it the immense sum of £1,500. The brass screen which surrounds the Tomb is entirely English, and at one time was adorned with no less than thirty-six statues, of which only six now remain.

In addition to the Tomb itself, Torregiano made and adorned in costly marble inlay and carving a lofty Reredos, with a wonderful figure of the dead Christ surrounded by angels, all exquisitely modelled in terra cotta. This Reredos appears to have been utterly destroyed by a certain Sir Robert Harlow in

1643, and the broken-up fragments remain in the Triforium to this day. It used to be described as the monument to Edward VI., who was buried under it. Some of the fragments of the marble altar were identified by Professor Middleton among the Arundel marbles at Oxford, and have been restored to the Chapel, forming the supports of the present altar.

It is worth while reproducing Malcolm's impression of Henry VII.'s Chapel before the Reformation:—

"Divesting the subject of every vestige of superstitious veneration," he says, "and viewing it merely as a spectacle of extreme grandeur, I cannot avoid calling to my readers' recollection the superb scene Henry VII.'s Chapel must have presented when just completed. Then the windows were filled with painted glass, and the light which streamed through them was tinged with a warm glow of colour that heightened the brilliancy of the gold and silver utensils of the various altars and the embroidered vestments of the Priests, at the same time touching one pendant of the roof with purple, another with crimson, and a third with yellow. The burning tapers, waving with every current of air, varied the strong shadows on the exquisite statues above them, and shewed their features in every lineament. In the middle stood the vast cross of gold, in the centre of the high altar, behind it the polished brazen screen, and within it the tomb and altar glowing with the light of tapers. The sculptured walls and exquisite minutely carved roof bounded this unparalleled view, which, thanks to the skill of its Architect, still enchants us, though all its accompaniments are buried in irretrievable ruin."

It is here, perhaps, pardonable, and is distinctly interesting, if we make a lengthened quotation from the recent book on Westminster Abbey, by Mr. W. J. Loftie, F.S.A. In the chapter dealing with Henry VII.'s Chapel, he says this:—"Before giving, in technical terms, a brief description of the roof, it may be worth while to observe what was the object or tendency of mediæval Architecture. Every Architect then endeavoured to move forward, not, as now, to move backward.* There can be little doubt that it is to the imperfect knowledge they had of statics and other branches of science that we owe the introduction of the pointed arch. The theory of Architecture was that arches should, if possible, have round heads. The builders of the roof of the Chapel of Henry VII., in their last and crowning effort of Gothic art, endeavoured to make it as nearly flat as possible, and to get rid finally of the point. In this object they all but succeeded. Here is the technical description of the wonderful roof as nearly as possible given by Brayley, who probably had it

* I am afraid Mr. Loftie's sweeping assertion here will have to be greatly discounted.—J. D. M.

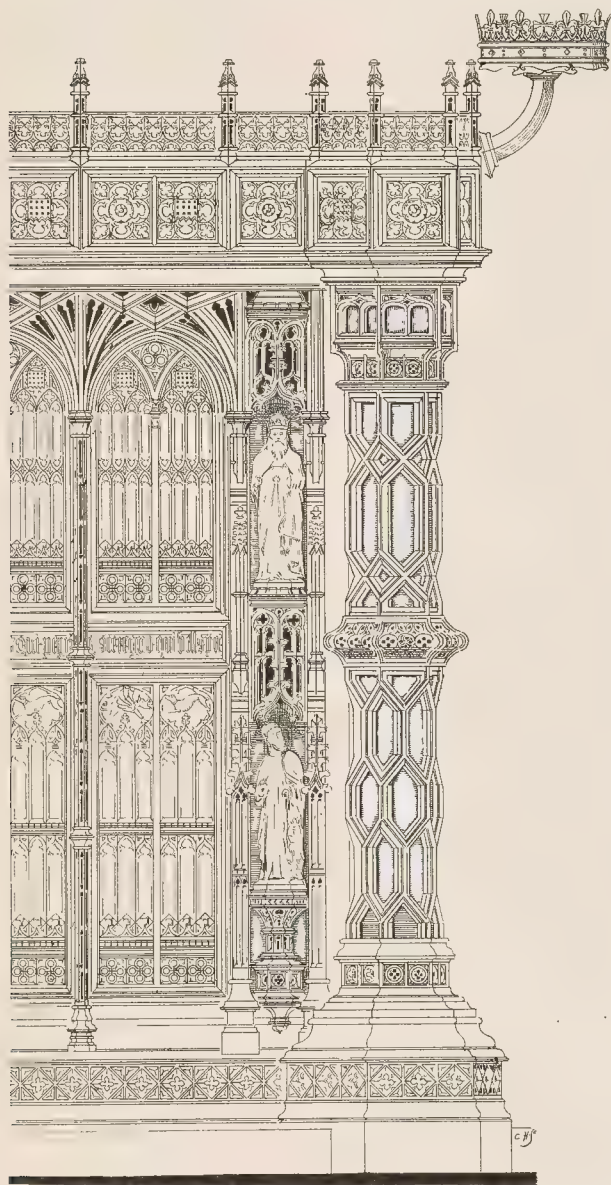
Westminster Abbey.

from Jeffrey Wyatt :—'The main ribs or groins spring from the capitals of triplicated columns, wrought in the face of the side piers, and they unite in the middle of the vaulting, forming a series of very slightly pointed arches. Every groin appears to go

through the centre of a vast circular pendant, which, growing from an octagonal base, extends the rich embroidery of its ramifications over the vaults till the extreme circles of each meet at the apex. All the pendants are contrived so that the stones composing

them may have the effect of keystones ; and as the groins which intersect them abut against the crossed springers, which stretch over the aisles from the exterior buttresses, the whole vaulting is as steadfast as any vaulting can be. To prevent the groins from spreading at the haunches, the space between them and the side piers is occupied by perforated masonry, and the angles of the piers are half-pendants.'"

Architecturally speaking, the Chapel consists of a Nave, two side Aisles, and five smaller apsidal Chapels. There is no entrance but from the interior of the Abbey, as shown in our illustration, but there is a small workman's door in one of the turrets, giving access to the south Aisle. The vaulting itself is supported by fourteen buttresses, or turrets, between which are thirteen windows, turrets and walls being covered with lace-like patterns, every part being enriched by minute tracery and thousands of roses, portcullises, flowers - de - luce lions, dragons and greyhounds. In one of the small Chapels at the east end there still exists the slab which at one time covered Cromwell's grave ; but it will be remembered that the Protector's body was removed a few years after its interment. Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth lie buried beneath their monuments in the north and south Aisles. Since Queen Elizabeth's death, twelve sovereigns of England have been buried in the Chapel, and yet, remarkable to relate, in no instance has any monument whatever been erected to their memory,



AN ANGLE OF HENRY VII.'S TOMB.

Westminster Abbey.



HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL.

DRAWN BY HERBERT RAILTON.

nor even so much as a line of inscription carved. Dean Stanley, who is himself buried in the Chapel, and to whom the royal sepulchres owe so much, placed the names of these neglected sovereigns as nearly as possible over the place where each was buried. James I., Charles II., William and Mary, Queen Anne, and George II. (the last of the royals), were laid in vaults; the Stuarts at the east of the North Aisle, those of the House of Hanover in the centre of the Chapel, near the west door.

In addition to these and the vault under the Shrine of Henry VII., there are at least two others; in fact, the whole area of the Chapel is honeycombed with them. Anne of Denmark is buried on the north side of the Shrine; her son Henry, with his elder brother, a child, in the South Aisle, with a great many other

scions of royalty, among whom rests, after her troubled life, Mary, Queen of Scots. Here, also, lie no fewer than eighteen children of Queen Anne. These facts were elicited upon the opening of the vault by Dean Stanley.

For three hundred years after the death of its royal builder, however, hardly anything was done in the way of repairs, either to the Chapel itself or even to other portions of the Abbey proper. Spoliation had been going on in a reckless fashion until Dean Vincent, at the beginning of the present century, approached Lord Grenville for national support, and his Lordship advised him to present a memorial to the House of Commons. The memorial being successful, restoration of the Chapel was commenced, and under the care of the Dean and James Wyatt, the Architect, Jeremiah Glanville, the clerk of works, and Thomas Gayfere, the mason, over £40,000 was spent, all the external walls being most carefully restored in their exuberant detail of enriched panelling, embossed niches, fretted tracery, and heraldic and decorative sculpture.

Perhaps no finer piece of restoration has ever been accomplished in the history of our country. We have, of course, no means of telling how far actual restoration was adhered to and what amount of old work was preserved. We fear very little, so that Wyatt's labour must have devolved into a very careful and exact copying of what had existed, the exact detail of which was fairly easy to ascertain,

owing to the intense repetition of parts. It was at a period more than a hundred years anterior to this restoration that it had been found necessary to tie the roof, in order to prevent the destruction of the whole mass. Of this we can speak when we come to treat of more recent restorations and repairs, but it may be remarked here that it was to the judicious care of Sir Christopher Wren, the exponent of the Classic Renaissance, that this gorgeous Gothic roof owes its preservation to this and future ages. The tie rods which he inserted are clearly shown in our illustration on a previous page.

In 1861, Sir Gilbert Scott wrote this in his "Gleanings from Westminster":—"We hope that the advice given by Lord Grenville to Dean Vincent (to apply to Parliament, &c.), and so judiciously

Westminster Abbey.

acted upon by him, will not be lost sight of by the present Dean and Chapter, and that the Parliament of Queen Victoria will treat the Chapter House with the same good taste and liberality which the Parliament of George IV. showed in the case of Henry VII.'s Chapel. The claim is a far stronger one, for in place of the decay of time only, as in the instance of the Chapel, we have in the case of the Chapter House actual violence, committed by Parliament itself, which first took possession of it for its own meetings, and then mutilated it for the purpose of turning it into a public Record Office, for which it was singularly ill-suited. . . . We hear that, if Parliament will grant the 'ruins' and £20,000 towards the dilapidations, the Dean and Chapter are intending to undertake the perfect restoration of this beautiful building, the present state of which is a disgrace to the country."

Sir Gilbert Scott could hardly have deemed it possible at this time that he himself should be called in to reinstate and restore the Chapter House over which he had always waxed enthusiastic. That he was so called in, and that he rescued a fine and noble piece of work from the degradation into which it had been gradually falling for several centuries, is known to all men; but how he accomplished his task, how he became intimately connected with the fabric of the Abbey, and what he did for its priceless

treasure will form the fitting opening of another chapter of its history. To Sir Gilbert Scott, more than to any other man of the century, the lovers of this venerable pile must always be indebted.

THE CHAPTER HOUSE.

We have now to deal with Scott's restoration of the Chapter House, before the interior of the Church proper. To do this accurately, we cannot do better than quote Sir Gilbert himself: "I had"—he writes—"almost immediately after my appointment as Architect of the Abbey, devoted a great amount of time to investigating, and making measured sketches of, the Chapter House, and I was therefore well prepared when, many years later, the work was actually placed in my hands. I may truly say that this was a labour of love, and that not a point was missed which would enable me to ascertain the actual design of any part; nor was any old feature renewed of which a trace of the old form remained. I know of no parts which are conjecturally restored but the following:—The external parapet, the pinnacles, the gables of the buttresses, and the roof. In my drawings, made long before, I had shewn the shortened window over the internal doorway as of five lights. I did so because some of the bases of the mullions remained which shewed the window to have been of five lights. Why, then, in the restora-



HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL.

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tion, it may well be asked, has it been made of only four lights like the other windows? I will explain why. All the other windows have ancient iron ties at, or near, the springings. These are of round iron, but hammered flat where they pass the mullions. Now the west, or shortened, window had lost all its tracery, and was walled up with the voussoirs of the vaulting ribs. On removing these, however, we found the iron tie-piece in its place, and it was flattened, like the others, for three (not four) mullions. It was clear, therefore, that the west window had been like the others. How comes it, then, that the mullion bases tell another tale? Why, it was clear, from fragments of tracery, that the window had been renewed 'by Abbot Byrcheston when he rebuilt the bays of the Cloisters opposite to the Chapter House entrance, and in the same style with them. He, therefore, had altered it from a four to a five-light window, and had moved the mullion bases, although he left the old tie in its place, flattened out for three mullions as he had found it."

A more elegant and exquisitely-proportioned interior than the lofty octagonal Chapter House could scarce be found. The diameter of the octagon is about 18 ft., and the height to the crown of the vaulting about 54 ft. The diameters of those others at Salisbury, Lincoln, and York seem all to be about the same. The central pillar is about 35 ft. high, and is entirely of Purbeck marble, consisting of a central shaft surrounded by eight subordinate shafts. The doorway itself has been a truly noble one. It was double, divided by a single central pillar, and a circle in the head. The jambs and arch are magnificent, and the former contains on the outer side four large shafts of Purbeck marble. Their caps are of the same material and most beautifully carved, and the spaces between the shafts richly foliated. "To get at some of the details of this doorway," writes Sir Gilbert in those argumentative and apologetic "Recollections" of his, "I had to creep on a mass of parchment and dust ten feet deep, and, after taking out the boarding at the back of the cases, to examine and draw by the help of a little bull's-eye lantern—a most laborious operation, and giving one more the look of a master chimney-sweep than an Architect."

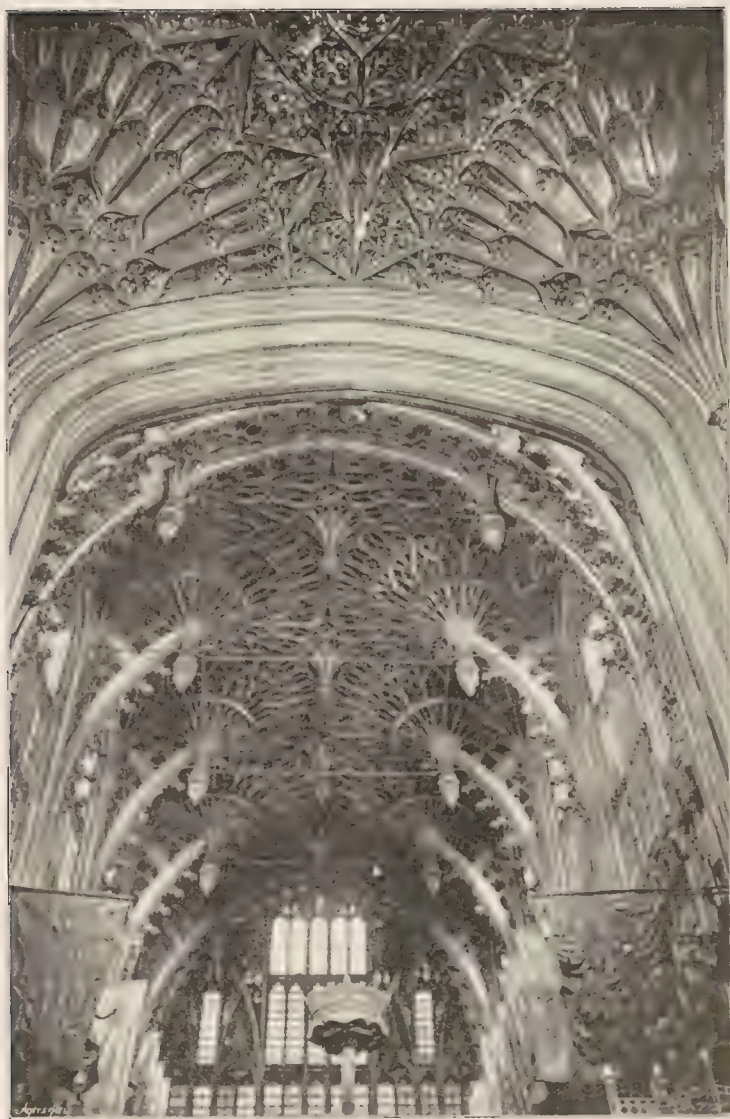
The walls below the windows are occupied by arcaded stalls with trefoiled heads; the details are of great richness, but one of the most remarkable features is the painting at the back of the stalls, most probably representing our Lord exhibiting the mysteries of the Redemption to the heavenly host, and presumably executed about the middle of the fourteenth century.

The entrance to the Chapter House from the Cloisters is formed by an outer and an inner vestibule. The outer vestibule is exceedingly low, owing to the

necessity for the dormitory to pass over it to effect a communication with the Church. It is vaulted in two spans, but a brick wall existed longitudinally down the centre, entirely hiding the marble pillars. Sir Gilbert removed this wall, and also a staircase which had actually been constructed to gain access to the room above, the vaulting having been destroyed for that purpose. He immediately set to work and restored the vaulting, two bays of which had completely gone. The detail of the entrance gateway from the Cloisters he does not seem to have touched, except to apply to it a solution of shellac. "This process," he says, "which has proved perfectly successful in the interior of the Abbey, was tried as an experiment in the bay of the Cloister which aligns with the entrance to the Chapter House. As to its success in *this* case, under conditions intermediate between those of external and internal Architecture, I am myself very doubtful." And his doubt was justified, for the application has in no way retarded the gradual decay of the stone. But Scott hoped that it would—he loved the fabric so. In one place in his "Recollections" he tells how tenderly the walls were treated. The decayed surface of the work, "like so much powder," was blown off by a bellows, and then the shellac applied through a fine-nozzled syringe to prevent any friction from a brush. Veneration could surely go no further than this, and we hold the memory of that busy Architect in honour for it. But let us not be understood to pronounce a benediction upon his restoration of the Chapter House and of other parts of the Abbey. He did no more than was necessary, and that much according to his lights; but, academically correct though his work may be, it is characterised by a mechanical and spiritless appearance infinitely distressing.

THE NAVE, TRANSEPT, AND CHOIR.

And now we come to the glorious interior of the Church itself—the long-drawn Aisle and fretted vault—the incomparable Transepts, the Chapels which encircle the Sanctuary, the Apse itself, the Choir, and the Nave. The period of the erection of the Abbey was undoubtedly one of the greatest transitional epochs of our Architecture. During the latter half of the twelfth century, the Romanesque or round Gothic arch had, both in France and in England, transformed itself by a thoroughly consecutive and logical series of changes into the First Pointed style, and in both countries that style had been worked into a state of perfect consistency, and in each it had assumed its national characteristics; so that the works in the Choir at Lincoln, the Lady Chapel at Westminster, and the western portals of St. Albans and Ely—all of which date from 1195 to 1215—mark the perfectly developed Early English style, and are



THE ROOF OF HENRY VII.'S CHAPEL

If this page be inserted and held horizontally over the spectator's head the exact impression of the roof can be obtained.—J. D. M.

Westminster Abbey.

readily distinguishable from the contemporary works in France. Judging from internal evidence, which is all we have to go upon until the published documents and archives of the Abbey are more thoroughly reached, it is probable that an English Architect or Master of the Works was commissioned to visit the great Cathedrals then in progress in France. The result is precisely what might have been expected from such a course. Had a French Architect been sent for, we should have had a plan really like some French Cathedral, and it would have been carried out with French details, as was the case with William of Sens' work at Canterbury. As it is, however, the plan, though founded

on that most common in France, differs greatly from any existing Church, and it contains no French details whatever, except the work of one French carver.

Unquestionably, the best point to gain a fine glimpse of the interior of the Abbey is by entering at the great west door,



ST. AMBROSE.
SIX STATUES FROM HENRY VII'S CHAPEL.

underneath those extraordinary towers of Wren or Hawksmoor, which we shall deal with when we come to treat of the exterior. There one gets a faithful idea of the nobleness of the entire interior, enhanced, perhaps, by the extent of the floor space being foreshortened by the Choir coming down so far into the Nave, and by Blore's screen being thrown across the entire width, giving a double distance to the upper portion of the Choir and Sanctuary, until the vista dimly ends in the eastern windows. The most striking fact, which is not apparent in many other Cathedrals and Abbeys, is the carefulness with which the builders, who added piecemeal to the Abbey during several centuries, faithfully continued the leading lines of the design of Henry III. The casual observer, unacquainted with the little details which form the history of Architecture, would never



ST. ANNE AND THE VIRGIN.



ST. ANTHONY.

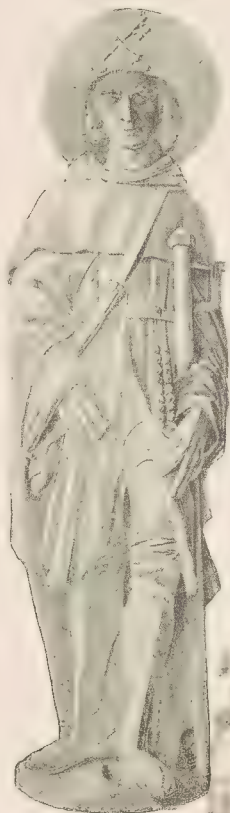
Westminster Abbey.

discover the fact, as he enters at the west end, that the Nave arches immediately on his right and left are centuries older than the extreme end of the Church. The whole appears to be the design and execution of one master-mind. And here we see a striking faculty of those Architects of the middle centuries, who could all build, not for their own gratification, but in furtherance of the noble works of men who had gone before them.

The great charm of Westminster is its noble height in comparison with its width. As one stands upon the floor of the Nave, and looks upward into the dim heights of that fine vaulting, one can watch the mounting up of detail, from those magnificent Nave piers and superb Nave arcading to the Triforium, which is unquestionably the finest in existence; and higher still to that remarkable Clerestory, which is in such magnificent proportion to the features below it. If we compare closely the most western bays with those nearing the crossing, we detect with some difficulty that the only difference is in the detail of moulding here and there, and



ST. JOHAN.



ST. ROCHE.



ST. EDWARD
DRAWN BY W. S. WEATHERLEY.

that the shafting to the Nave piers is not detached, as in the earlier work. We shall notice also that the spandrels of the arcading are plain—the diaper work of the earlier period being dispensed with. We shall see that the cusps and bosses of the groining are not quite so elaborate; but beyond this, all the lines, the contours of the arches, and the details of the Triforium are almost identically similar throughout the entire Church. All this is a virtue, the value of which it is impossible to over-estimate. Had Edward determined to go "one better" (or worse) than his distinguished father, he would have been the means of utterly ruining the uniformity and the grandeur of one of the finest Churches in the kingdom. But he knew better than that, and so

Westminster Abbey.

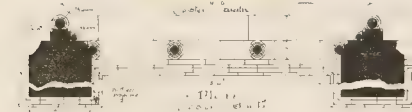
did the Abbots who came after him. It is only when we get nearer to modern times, and when we get closer under the influence of modern minds, or at any rate when we lose touch with the high artistic character of the best builders, that we endeavour to neglect the rules then laid down, and show the progression of Art in such incongruities as Wren's western towers. We almost feel inclined to thank God that the Nave of Westminster Abbey was completed before his day. What would have happened if Wren or Hawksmoor had found themselves called upon to add to or to complete the interior of the Church, would be too terrible for contemplation. It is more apparent in Westminster than in most Abbeys and Cathedrals that, owing to the shortness of the eastern arm of the Church, the Choir has been brought down in the Nave four bays beyond the crossing. Up to 1847 the Choir was screened from both Transepts, so that the view which is now obtained from the north and south porches was foreshortened. But Blore very wisely removed these screens, and terminated the Nave end of the Choir by the erection of the stone screen



DRAWN BY HERBERT RAILTON.

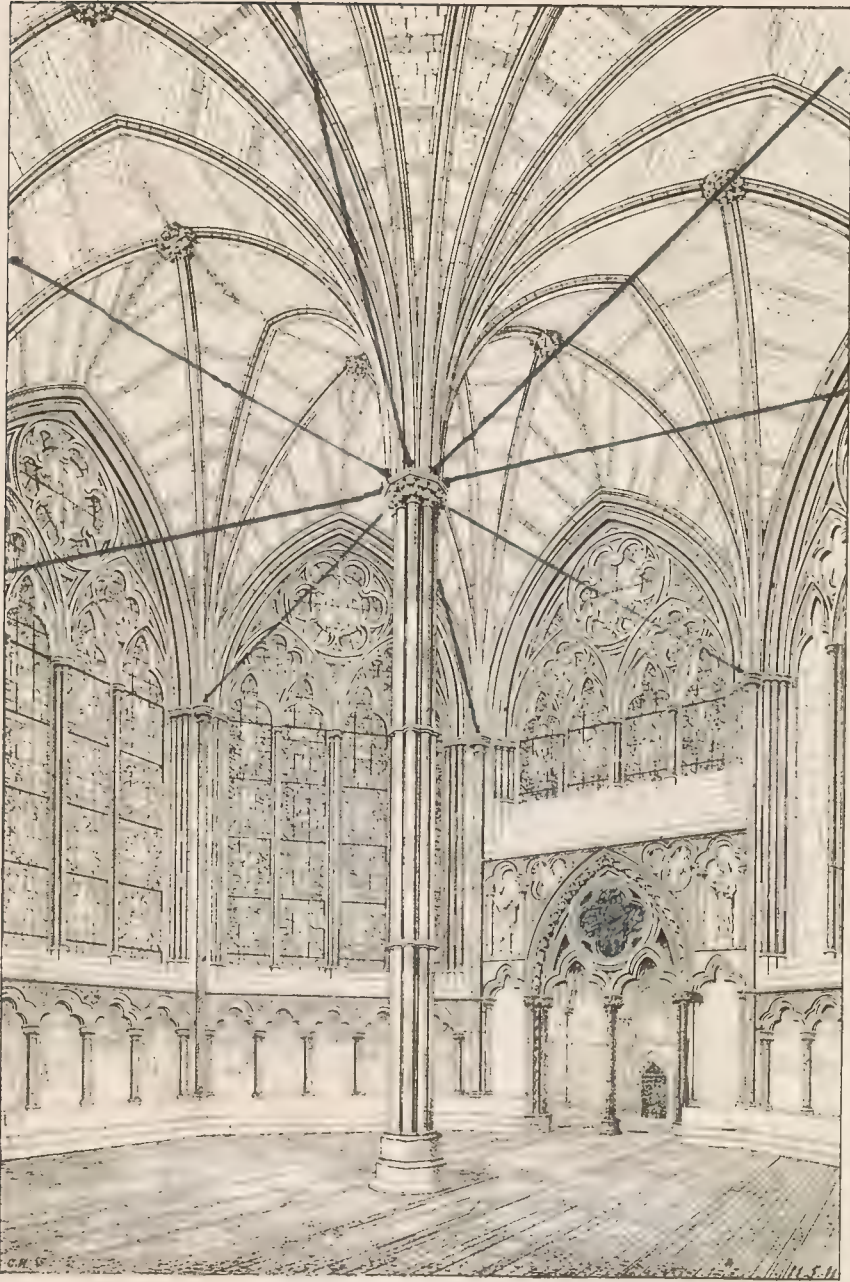
already mentioned, which we are, perhaps, not sufficiently enamoured of. The Choir, therefore, reaches from Edward the Confessor's screen at the east end, to Blore's on the west. The organ at one time was built across the Nave, but it has for some years been removed in two sections, occupying a Nave arch on either side, which adds very greatly to the scale of the interior. One must not forget to look at the very fine pavement of the Choir, which was laid down at the cost of Dr. Busby, Master of Westminster School, who was buried under it two centuries ago. The mosaic pavement—or what is left of it—of the sanctuary shows very clearly that Henry III. designed one of the most remarkable pavements in existence. The old altar-piece, which stood for more than a century, was a composition of the Classical orders presumed to have been designed by Inigo Jones, and given to the Church by Queen Anne. But, although the entire thing must have been quite remarkable, its existence in a purely Gothic Church was intensely inharmonious. It was Wyatt who removed it, and designed and placed in position the more appropriate

Altar and screen which we see to-day. Curiously to relate, the vaulting of the Choir proved to have been of much inferior workmanship than other portions of Henry's work, but Wren, in his restoration, put it into very excellent condition, and it will be noticed that it is in character and quite



A BAY OF THE CLOISTER'S.

MEASURED AND DRAWN BY BURKE DOWNING



THE CHAPTER HOUSE

DRAWN BY W H WEATHERLEY

Westminster Abbey.

similar to the vaulting of other parts of the main structure. When the Lantern, however, was rebuilt by Wyatt, in 1803, the groining, for some reason or another, was constructed of a plastic composition, instead of stone. The bosses were gilt, to correspond with the decoration of the eastern portions, and, we believe, were "thrown up" from the surfaces of the vaulting, by means of a little decorative trickery, which, however, impossible of detection from the Nave, only requires to be known to be described as iniquitous.

pages, that there is no western aisle to the South Transept, but that the space between the roof of the Cloisters and the floor of the Triforium level is used as a muniment room, a view of which can be obtained—from the Triforium of the eastern aisle—through the tops of the arches which are open to the Transept. A photograph shewing this is in our possession, but was unfortunately too poor for adequate reproduction. In the North Transept, the eastern aisle was originally devoted to three Chapels, dedicated to St. John, St. Michael, and St. Andrew, but the screens dividing



INTERIOR ELEVATION OF THE ENTRANCE
TO THE CHAPTER HOUSE.

MEASURED AND DRAWN BY
ERNEST C. SHEARMAN.

Of the Transepts, Scott considered that the interior design of the ends was "truly magnificent," and he doubts whether their equals could be found. It will be noticed, from the plan which we publish in these

one from the other have gradually disappeared or been removed, so that the demarcations of the Chapels no longer exist. The North Transept itself is destroyed by the abundance of statues and monu-

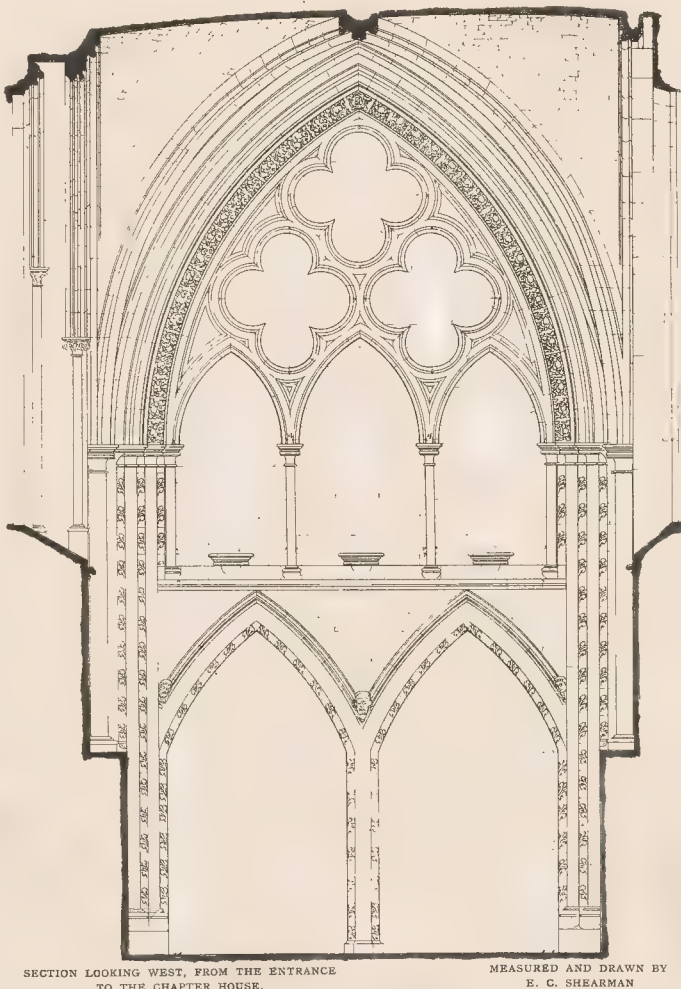
Westminster Abbey.

ments to the dead, detracting, in many instances, from the scale of the Transept arcade, and making altogether an incongruous mass of sculptural detail, much to be regretted. It is not an altogether fortunate thing that Westminster Abbey should have become, by long custom and common consent, the national Walhalla and the dumping-ground of so much atrocious statuary.

Scott discovered that the original design for the rose window in the North Transept was repeated, curiously enough, on several of the encaustic tiles in the Chapter House, and in his "Gleanings" he gives a restored design of the window, based upon his discovery. The sculpture and the spandrels of the Triforium, known as the Angel arcading, are extremely fine, and we have been fortunate in obtaining a very excellent photograph of the principal figure, reproduced herewith. The detail drawing also, of the Triforium of the South Transept, will give an adequate idea of the remarkable beauty of this portion of the work. More than one writer has dwelt upon the extraordinary area of the Triforium right round the Church, but it must be granted that it was originally intended for the accommodation of vast concourses of people who were collected together upon ceremonial occasions. The construction of the floor of the Triforium, and the position of the windows, which detract somewhat from the scale of the exterior, go to prove that this was the case. The South Transept has always been known as the Poets' Corner, and therein lie buried many of the poetical

writers of England, a few of its Architects, and artists in other media.

Upon the Poets' Corner, Mr. W. J. Loftie speaks very pertinently in his book upon the Abbey, and so accurately does he portray our own feelings upon the subject, that we shall offer no excuse for quoting him fully. "I confess to a feeling of weariness," he says, "at the number of cenotaphs we see here. A cenotaph is defined as a monument of a person buried else-



where; and the Poets' Corner is crammed with such memorials, and especially with busts. Ansley, Sharp, Goldsmith, Coleridge, Thomson, Thackeray and many others, are buried elsewhere and have no need

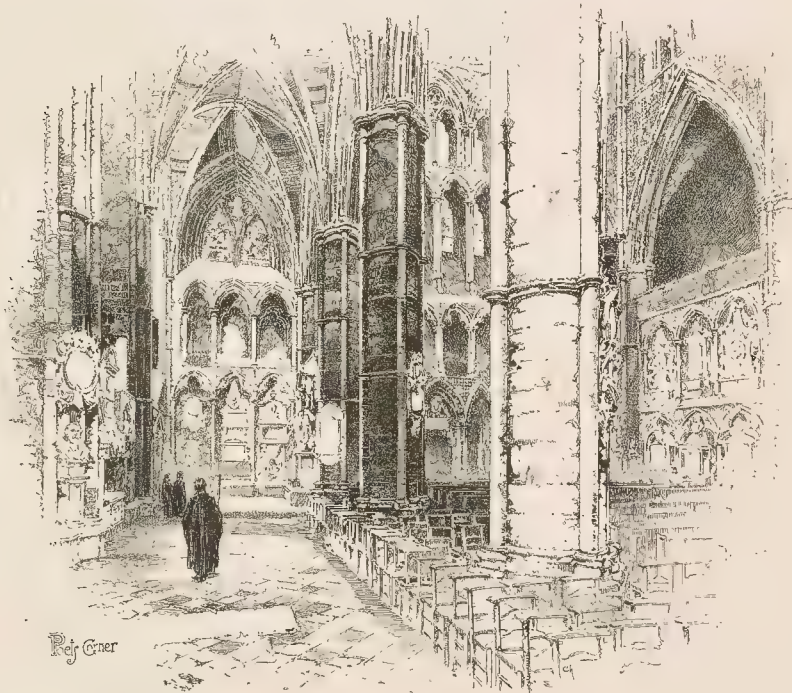
Westminster Abbey.

for representation here. This is especially true of Shakespeare and Milton; the one sleeps in the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, and the other at Stratford-on-Avon. An opposite case is that of Dr. Johnson, who, though he is buried here, has a monument in St. Paul's. The busts, set simply on brackets, and not forming part of any architectural composition, are also disagreeable to the eye in proportion as, from their prominence, they intrude themselves upon the sight. Keble's absurd nude bust is not, as it should be, in Poets' Corner, but in the Baptistry, which has, indeed, been sometimes called the deputy Poets' Corner. But in reality all the monuments of poets here—Keble's, Herbert's, Cowper's, Wordsworth's and Kingsley's—are cenotaphs. There is only a gravestone over Charles Dickens, in the South Transept, and it is a pity his body was not buried—as it is understood he wished himself—in Rochester Cathedral. Another very typical example of the professional literary men of the generation just gone by was Lord Lytton, whose grave is very near. He rests among princes and princesses in the Chapel of St. Edmund." It is an extraordinary fact, and one extremely sad, that the

poets actually buried in Poets' Corner died in the most abject poverty. Chaucer—one of the first to be buried here—"fell into poverty in his old age." Spencer "died for lack of bread"; and yet he had something like a public funeral.

The remarkably long and varied series of monuments contained within this glorious Church, mark, indeed, the resting-places of the most of them that have made the English tongue the strong and nervous speech it is in this our time. They serve to show, also, where courtiers and favourites, statesmen, musicians, actors, and men of science have been laid, with the approval of their contemporaries, if not always with that of posterity. Contemporary opinion has often been too amiable, and to its necessary want of historical perspective we owe the inclusion within these storied walls of nonentities not a few and notoriety too many and too outrageous for sepulture in this place. The company of the illustrious dead is not unmixed with those who have no right in their society, and their monuments are equally divided between good and bad.

Macaulay rests at the foot of Addison's statue, and near by are the simple inscriptions that mark where



POETS' CORNER (SOUTH TRANSEPT).

DRAWN BY HERBERT RAILTON.

Westminster Abbey.

two great Victorian poets—Tennyson and Browning—lie. It is strange to reflect upon the numerous actors and actresses buried here in the past century, during periods in which their profession was in full receipt of that contumely which branded the historian as a rogue. Anne Oldfield died in 1730, and was brought in state to the Jerusalem Chamber, and buried, with the utmost pomp, at the west end of the Nave, in (to quote the testimony of her maid, Elizabeth Saunders) "a very fine Brussels lace head, a Holland shift, and double ruffles of the same lace, and a new pair of kid gloves." This was not lost upon that malicious satirist, Pope, who wrote :—

" 'Odious! in woollen! 'twould a saint provoke,'
Were the last words that poor Narcissa spoke,
'No, let a charming chintz and Brussels lace
Wrap my cold limbs, and shade my lifeless face;
One would not, sure, be frightful when one's dead—
And—Betty—give this cheek a little red.' "

Anne Bracegirdle, the most popular actress of her time, died in 1748, and lies in the East Cloister; Mrs. Cibber in the North. "Cibber dead!" exclaimed Garrick, "then Tragedy expired with her."

Betterton, "the Roscius of his age," was the first male actor buried in the Abbey, May 2nd, 1710; and the first whose name has come down familiarly to our own time was Samuel Foote, who pleased Doctor Johnson against his will—"the dog was so very comical, sir, he was irresistible!" This was in 1777. Two years later came that "stroke of death which eclipsed the gaiety of nations and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasures." Garrick was dead. He was buried at the foot of Shakespeare's statue, and his monument towers aloft on the opposite wall. To it Charles Lamb refers: "Taking a turn in the Abbey the other day, I was struck with the affected altitude of a figure which, on examination, proved to be a whole length representation of the celebrated Mr. Garrick. Though I would not go so far, with some good Catholics abroad, as to shut players altogether out of consecrated ground, yet I own I was a little scandalised at the introduction of theatrical airs and gestures into a place set apart to remind us of the saddest realities. Going nearer, I found inscribed under this harlequin figure a farrago of false thoughts and nonsense."

Among musicians, Purcell is foremost. He was organist of the Abbey, and died in 1695. He lies in the North Aisle of the Choir, close to that organ which under his hands had filled these vaulted roofs so long with melody. The Latin inscription of his tomb is effaced. Opposite lies John Blow, his successor as organist, and succeeding him William Croft. Handel's grave is in Poet's Corner. Above it is his monument, by Roubiliac, with that fine inscription, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Artists, by some wicked disposition of ironic circumstance, find no resting-place at Westminster, and only one is represented here—and that merely by a cenotaph, for Kneller's monument does not cover his body, which is laid elsewhere. St. Paul's enshrines the artists, who would, surely, much prefer, could they have the choice, to rest in this soaring fane, rather than under the heavy, uninspiring Classic Architecture of St. Paul's. Of Architects and sculptors, the graves of Sir William Chambers and Wyatt, and the monument of Taylor are in the South Transept, and the tablet of Banks in the North Aisle; while in the Nave lies Sir Charles Barry, whose grave is covered with a very odd modern attempt at a monumental brass. Perhaps it was not to be expected that 1860 could produce anything more nearly in touch with Gothic work.

Sir Isaac Newton, who died March 28th, 1727, is buried in the Nave, in front of the entrance to the Choir. The selection of this spot marks the time at which the more sacred recesses of the Church were considered to be closed. Dean Stanley very oddly says that this was the interment of "the only dust of unquestionably world-wide fame that the floor of Westminster covers." The physicians and men of science here are many, but few of their names mean much to the present generation. The remains of John Hunter, the famous surgeon, who died in 1773, were transferred from the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields to the Abbey in 1859, by Frank Buckland, who searched sixteen days in the dreary catacombs of that edifice for the bones of that founder of scientific surgery before he found them.

James Watt, the engineer, is not buried at Westminster, but a gigantic statue of that "Improver of the Steam Engine," by Chantry, is his memorial. Of all the monuments in the Abbey, this, perhaps, is the one which provokes the loudest execrations from those who look for uniformity of design with the Gothic Architecture of the place. Near by sleep those mighty men of science who have made this era of steam and railways: Telford, Robert Stephenson, and Brunel. With their inclusion within the Abbey's solemn bounds the functions of her guardianship are become, what, perhaps, they never were before, truly national.

Well may the pavement have cracked and yawned as the enormous monster moved into its place, and disclosed to the eyes of the astonished workmen rows upon rows of gilded coffins in the vaults beneath, into which, but for the precaution of planking the area, workmen and work must have descended, joining the dead in the chamber of death. Well may the standard-bearer of Agincourt, and the worthies of the Courts of Elizabeth and James have started from their tombs if they could have seen this

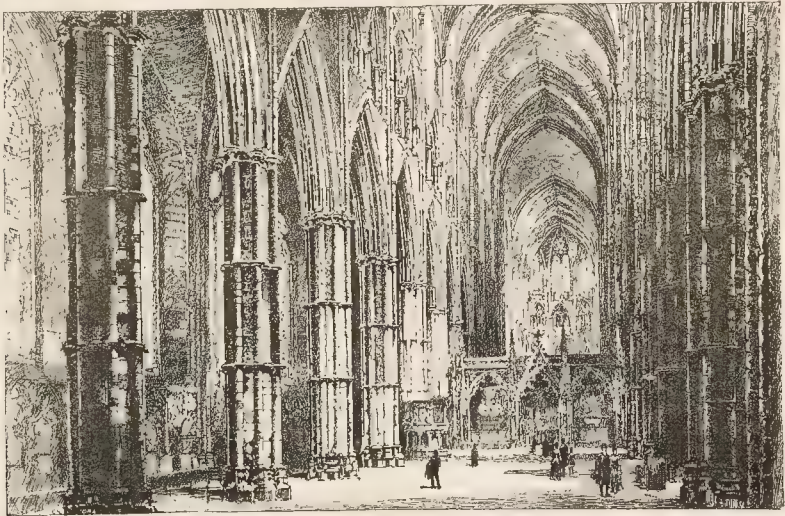
Westminster Abbey.

colossal champion of a new plebeian art enter their aristocratic resting-place, and take up his position in the centre of the little Sanctuary, regardless of all proportion or style in all the surrounding objects.

The romance of history, even in times comparatively recent, is recalled by the bust of Pascal Paoli, the champion of Corsican independence, who died in 1802, in his eighty-second year, far from his native island, for which he struggled so desperately, and to which his remains were removed in 1867. But outside these walls, in the Cloister's humble space, lie many unrecorded retainers of the Court and of the

Hercules. He was the "Prince of Prizefighters" in his time, a time which ended in 1789; and a blank space was left on his tombstone, after his name, which was to have been filled up with the words "Champion of England." But the Dean objected, and the space has yet to be filled.

In this instance we are at one with the dignified clergy, for it would have been nothing less than a scandal, thus to have handed down to posterity this record of the Prize Ring, within the shadow of the great Minster. The surprising thing is to find, in these godless times, anyone objecting to anything of the kind. But, nowadays, we have



THE NAVE FROM THE WEST

DRAWN BY HERBERT RAILTON.

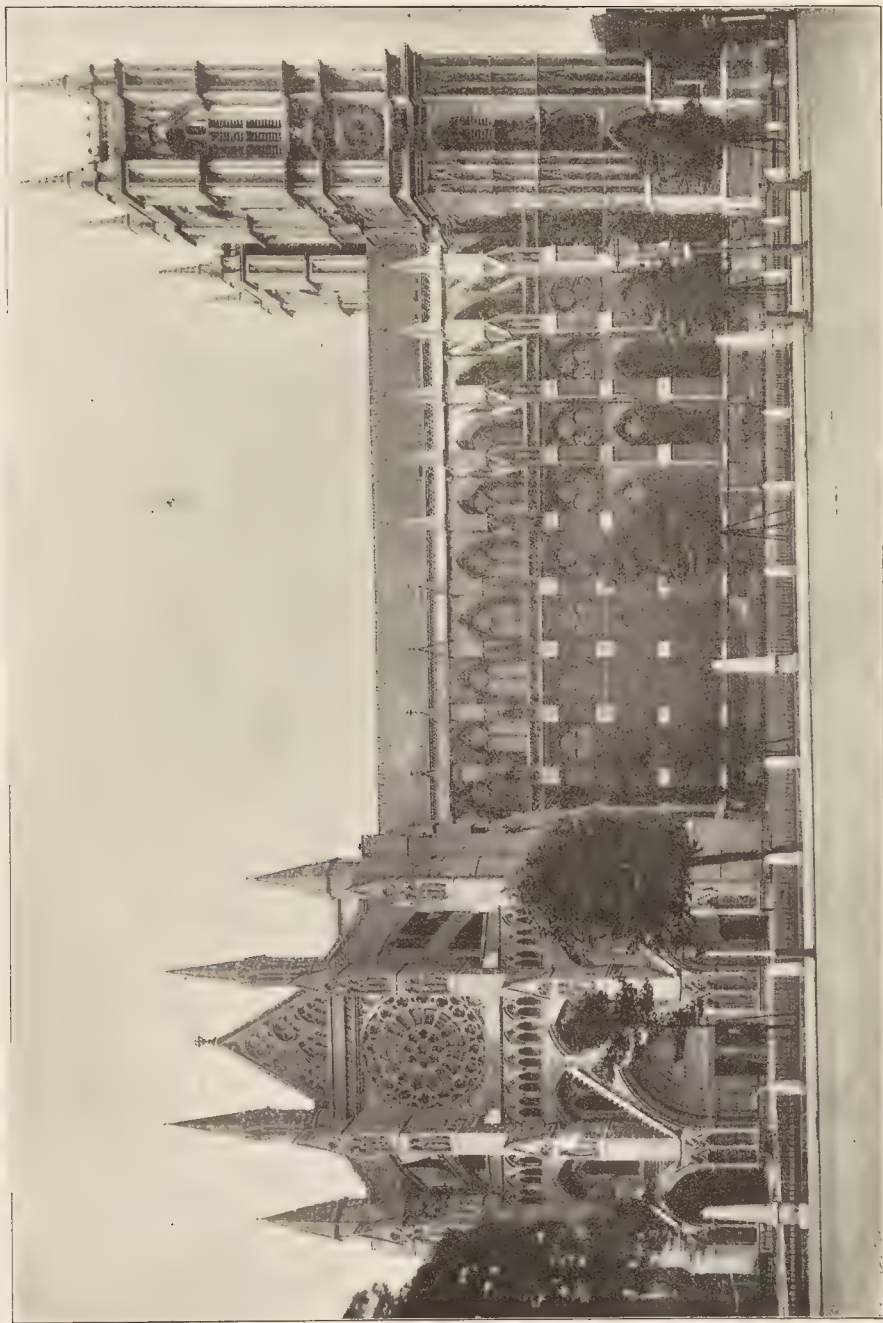
Chapter. One there is, indeed, whose virtues are set forth at some pains, one William Laurence, who died in 1621:—

"With diligence and trust most exemplary,
Did William Laurence serve a Prebendary
And for his paines now past, before not lost,
Gain'd this remembrance at his master's cost
O read these lines againe: you seldome find
A servant faithful, and a master kind
Short-hand he wrote: his flowre in prime did fade,
And hasty Death short-hand of him hath made.
Well covth he slumbers, and well mesur'd land;
Thus doth he now that ground whereon you stand,
Wherein he lyes so geometrical:
Art maketh some, but this will nature all."

Another is that of John Broughton, one of the Yeomen of the Guard. He was a man of gigantic strength, and in his youth sat to Rysbrach for his

swung the pendulum of taste violently the other way; the literature of epitaphs is severely overlooked in town or country, and even such as that of William Laurence are impossible.

Before we come to review the exterior of the Abbey Church and its precincts, a few details of the materials used in its construction during the centuries will be of paramount interest and value to all Architects, and to not a few of those intellectual laymen who find a keen pleasure in sifting the actual history of our Churches. Mr. Alfred Waterhouse, R.A., is an authority upon "material," and we cannot do better than quote his description of the stone to be found in the Abbey. That most largely used was the green sandstone, called "firestone" from its resistance to fire. It came from "Godstone" in Surrey—a name implying the sacred use to which the stone was put. It was of a fine warm greenish-



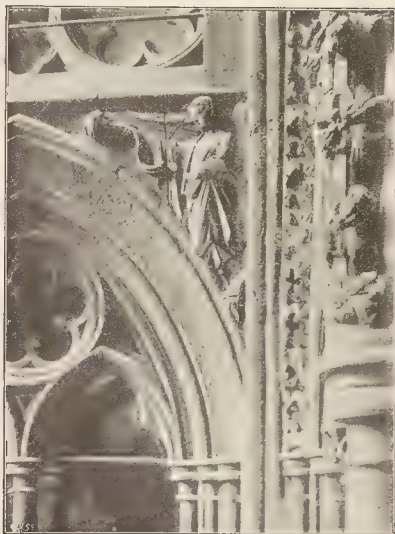
THE NORTH FRONT—SHEWING MR. PEARSON'S RESTORATION OF THE TRANSEPT.



Westminster Abbey.

yellow tone, and easily worked. Associated with it was chalk—from the lower beds at Merstham in the same county—an excellent material when kept from damp, most perishable when subjected to it. The good effect of colour produced in the filling in of the vaults, both in the Cloisters and the Church itself, is due to the alternate banding of these stones. In addition, the curious in such matters may find tufa, a coarse, loosely-compacted, and very light limestone, used in the east wall of the dormitory, where the Westminster boys now have their gymnasium. Caen stone was also used, or an oolite from Normandy very like Caen, which was really one of the most easily procurable stones for building in London, owing to difficulties of land transit in those days. In addition to the firestone, the chalk, the tufa, and the Normandy oolite, which appear to have been used by the great builders of the Abbey—Edward, Henry III. and his successors—Purbeck marble was largely employed for the detached shafts and frequently for both bases and capitals, sometimes also for the piers themselves, although, owing to its extreme hardness, it was seldom used when elaborate carving was intended. There is a notable exception to this in the centre pier to the Chapter House, which has a splendidly carved capital in Purbeck. The old Purbeck was much richer and more varied in colour than that now to be obtained. A sample of the original polish still lingers in the Chapel of St. Michael, North Transept. It was introduced also into the pavements, for steps, and played an important part in the priceless pavements of the Shrine of the Confessor and the Sacarium.

Abbot Litlington, in the fourteenth century, appears to have used Roche Abbey stone, and Abbot Islip, in the sixteenth, an oolite from Oxfordshire, in the



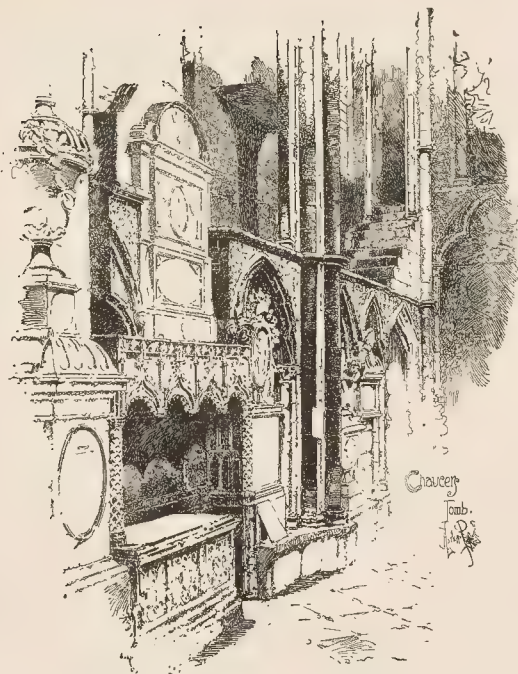
THE ANGEL TRIFORIUM (NORTH TRANSEPT).

north-west tower. In the upper part of the western towers, rebuilt by Sir Christopher Wren, Portland stone was employed. The stone, though too cold in colour, is unequalled for durability in London, and the six western Clerestory windows on the south side were rebuilt externally with it in 1730. But the surveyors of the Abbey—says Mr. Waterhouse—after Wren, Dickinson (who restored the great rose window in the North Transept) and Tufnel, are said to have employed, in their day, the Oxfordshire stone. It was the last-named who scraped off the exposed surface of the stone externally, to get rid of the decay, thereby destroying the contour of the mouldings, reducing their size and effect, and by exposing another surface to the corroding air, leading to the necessity, in our day, of replacing much of the masonry with entirely new work to save the fabric from utter ruin. In the restoration of the Cloisters, Scott used Ketton or Mansfield Woodhouse stone in the south walk, Tadcaster in the west walk, Bath for the front of the buttresses on the north side of the Nave, Tisbury in the Chapter House, and Chilmark elsewhere. Westminster Abbey, therefore, may justly be considered a geological museum of the greatest interest, as it enables us to watch the



THE TRIFORIUM OF THE NAVE.

Westminster Abbey.



CHAUCER'S TOMB.

DRAWN BY HERBERT RAILTON.

effect of the climate of London on almost every description of building stone in general use, except the sandstone so much used in the North.

Sir Gilbert gives a striking instance of the effect of the London atmosphere upon building stone. When he was engaged in the rebuilding of the Chapter House he came across some ashlar of Henry III.'s time, with delicate mason's marks which had been exposed for three centuries without any deterioration and afterwards cased with brickwork. These identical stones were used on the same spot by Sir Gilbert, but with their surfaces exposed to the air, and in less than one year the whole of the marks had disappeared, thanks to the sulphurous atmosphere of London in general and the Lambeth potteries in particular.

THE EXTERIOR.

We have now to deal with the exterior of the Church, having reversed the usual order of things by leaving to the last that which is the least interesting portion of the Abbey of Westminster. There is naturally not an atom of the external work of Henry III. now left, or of those abbots who came after him and who added to the fabric which he himself commenced; neither have we any proof, beyond the supposition that bases itself upon the

probable, that the restorers or repairers of the centuries copied the work which existed previously. On these grounds alone the external aspect of the fabric is far less interesting, and far less worthy of study than that glorious interior, that never seems to lose its magnificent fascination.

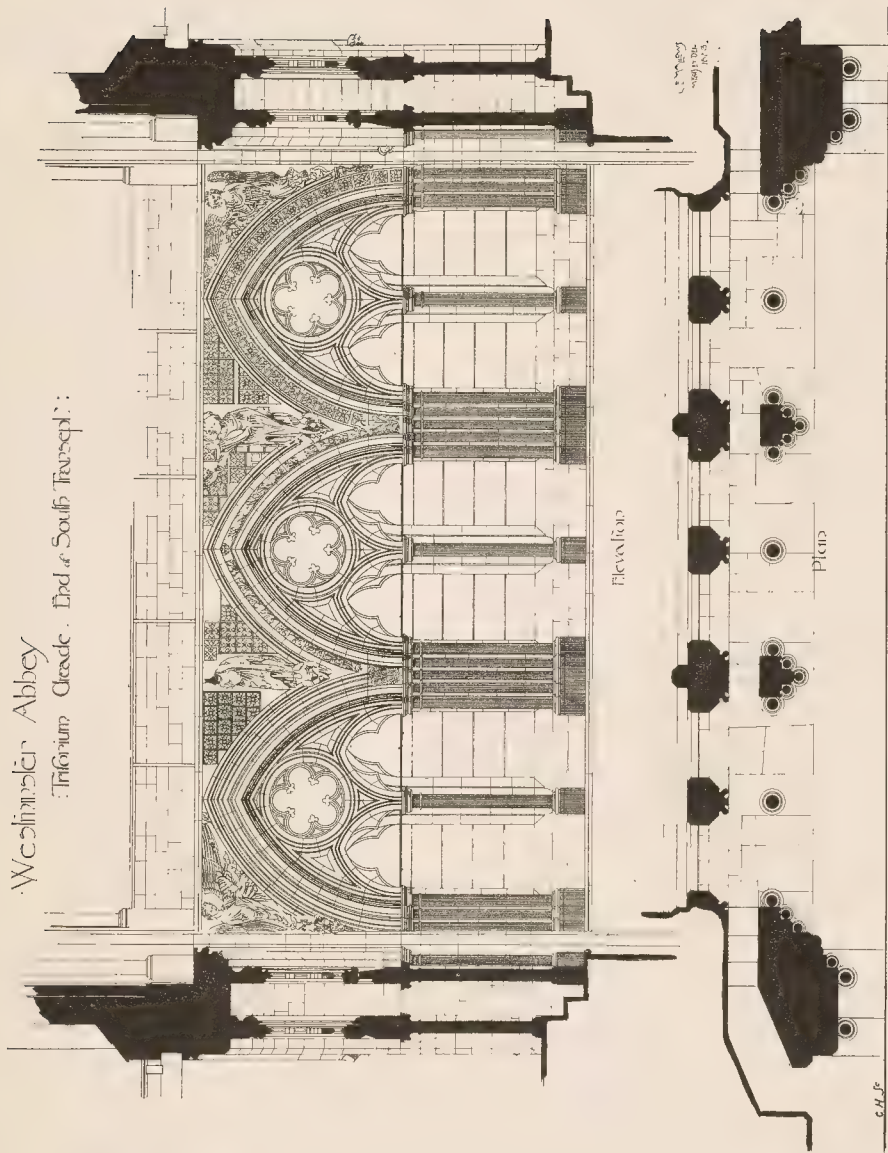
"How many a sacred pile in this fair land,
Touched, and re-touched by some unholy hand,
A modern motley garb, incongruous wears,
Veiling the venerable form of years."

There is really no point from which a good view of the Abbey can be obtained. From the north-east the Church of St. Margaret entirely blocks the way, although it adds scale to the Mother Church. From the north-west one gets a fairly good sweep of the west front, the western towers, and the North Aisle. From the south no view is possible except the picturesque glimpse from Dean's yard, so beautifully depicted in the drawing which appears on p. 6.

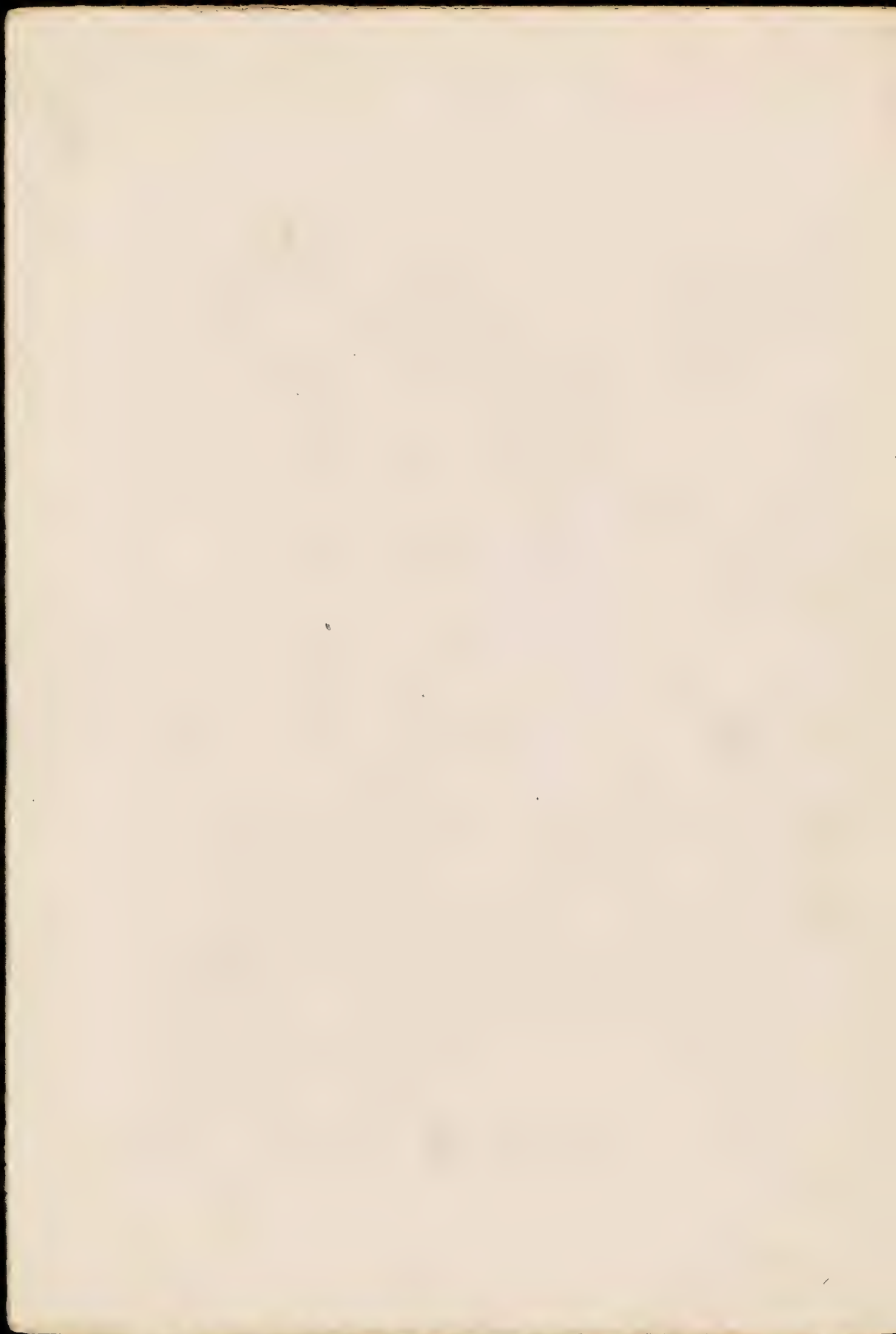
The new view opened up by the demolition of the old houses previously existing in Poets' Corner certainly exposes the fine Chapter House, but very little else. The east end is, of course, the east end of Henry VII.'s Chapel, a good elevation of which can be obtained, and the "exuberant luxuriance" of which may also be studied without difficulty. "It would seem," says one early writer on the exterior of this Chapel, "as though the Architect had intended to give the stone the character of embroidery; and enclose his walls within the meshes of lace-work." With the exception of the plinth, every part is covered by sculptural decorations; the buttress towers are crested by ornamental domes, and enriched by niches and elegant tracery; the cross springers are perforated with airy forms; and the cornices and parapets charged, even to profusion, with armorial cognizances and entwined foliage.

In the front of the North Transept we have the most interesting bit of exterior work. We are enabled to put, side by side with each other, engravings of this front previous and subsequent to its restoration. The old engraving gives us the elevation after all the restorers, up to Wyatt, had put their touch upon it. The later view shows what Scott in a small measure and Pearson in a greater began and completed. The façade itself may be described as consisting horizontally of four compartments. The central and western porches open into the Transept, the eastern being a "blind" entry, filled by a panelling of trefoil arches resting on slender columns,

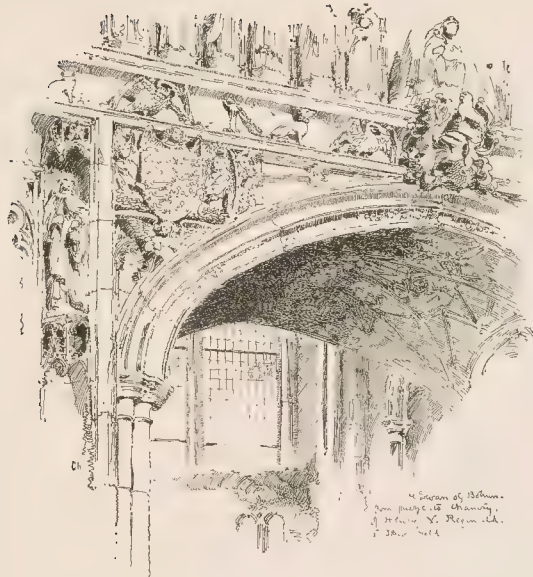
Westminster Abbey
 Triforium Arcade. End of South Transept.



TRIFORIUM ARCADE, SOUTH TRANSEPT.



Westminster Abbey.



THE CHANTRY OF HENRY V.

DRAWN BY REGINALD T. BLOMFIELD

much of which is Wren's work. A detail of the central porch is given on another page, and it must be admitted—laymen's opinion to the contrary notwithstanding—that this is about the finest piece of "restoration" known. It will be easy to detect where Mr. Pearson has departed from the "design" of this front as he found it, and, except in one instance, departed from it with very excellent success. The curved gable "hood" of the central porch he discarded with great good judgment. The cresting over the second "compartment" he removed with much excellent effect; the terminations of the buttresses he "restored," in keeping with the others on the north side of the Church; and altered the great rose window—unhappily we think—into quite different detail, unrestful detail which compares but ill with the simple but dignified tracery of Wren's design. We much prefer the window of 1722, shown in the older engraving, whether it was a replica or not. The gems of this front are the porches and the colonnade arches, which are fully proportioned, and evidently follow the "scheme" of the reforms in the interior.

The north side of the Nave and Aisle exterior is supported by nine graduated buttresses which terminate in pyramids, from which a double tier of flying buttresses springs. The parapet of the Aisle is battlemented, and at this level the buttresses possess niches in which statues of the benefactors of this part of the work were originally placed. What

statues now exist are modern. Between every two buttresses is a large, pointed arched window, divided by a mullion into the compartments below and above by tracery, into circular and quatrefoil lights reaching to the crown of the arch, and having smaller lights in the angles. Another range of windows, each consisting of three circles inscribed within a triangle, extends over the former range, and rises to the water tables of the under part of the Aisle battlements. A third and upper range of windows, of corresponding character with those first described, but not of equal height, forms the Clerestory, an embattled parapet terminating all.

The west front, shown in the fine engraving, from a photograph specially taken, consists of a deeply recessed entrance porch, having a large and elegant pointed arched window above, and the square towers at the angles to a height of 225 feet. The Architectural anomalies displayed in this front are peculiarly remarkable, and they are still more apparent in the towers than in the central divisions. This arises from the heightening



IN THE CHOIR.

of the towers and the other alterations commenced in 1697. The credit of completing the

Westminster Abbey.



THE EAST END FROM THE CHOIR

west front as it anciently appeared is due to the Abbots Estney and Islip, but it was never entirely finished till the time of George II. "It is evident," wrote Wren, "that the two towers were left imperfect, the one much higher than the other; though still too low for bells, which are stifled by the height of the roof above them; they ought, certainly, to be carried to an equal height, one story above the ridge of the Nave roof, still continuing the Gothic manner in the stone work and tracery. Something must be done to strengthen the west window which is crazy; the pediment is only boarded but ought undoubtedly to be of stone." From the "draughts and models" of Sir Christopher this front was subsequently completed, and the towers carried up to their present elevation, and they furnish a memorable example of his failure to assimilate the principles of Grecian Architecture to those of the Pointed Style.³²

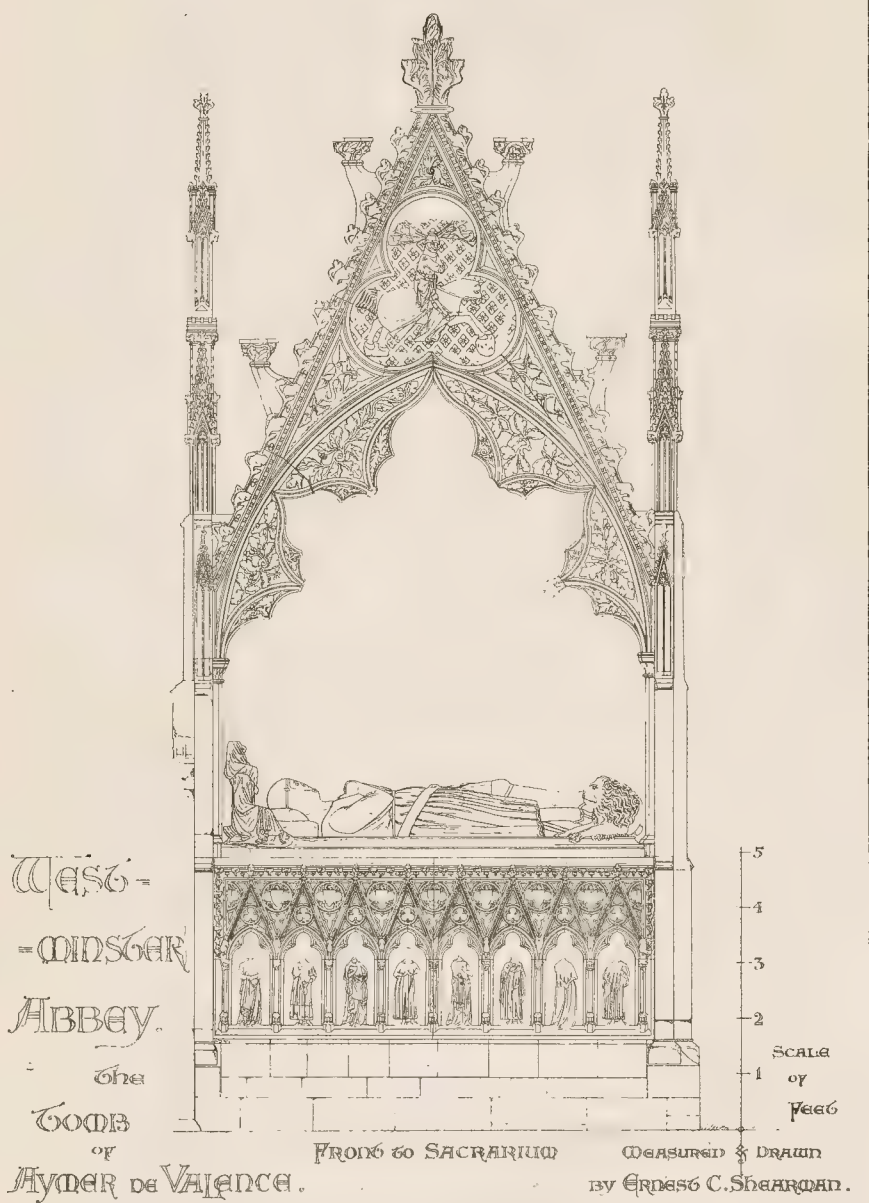
³² We think a very striking fact may be drawn from the work of those great Architects who, in their time, were intimately connected with Westminster Abbey, and who, each in their own particular style, created works of which we are now very proud. Nothing could have been more disastrous than Wren's attempt to add two Western Towers to a Gothic Church, except, perhaps, Scott's idea of a Classic building, as depicted in the Foreign Office. Had only time and circumstance reversed this order of things and given the Towers to Scott and the Foreign Office to Sir Christopher? It would be interesting to hear what that delightful literary man, Frederick Harrison, would do with these Western Towers when decay and dereliction came upon them. Would he call in an engineer to save them, or would he ask some reputable Architect to replace them with something less incongruous!

—EDITOR.

The south side of the Abbey Church exhibits many singular peculiarities, arising from the contiguity of the cloisters and the ingenuity that was necessary in supporting the walls of the Nave and the thrusts of the vaulting beyond the Cloisters, which adjoin the South Aisle. The first six buttresses, westward from the South Transept, have their bases within the Cloister green, and take the thrust of the Nave and Aisle vaulting in a series of four immense flying buttresses, the uppermost of which extends right over the Cloister and Aisle. The whole of this exterior portion of the Church, together with the external front of the Cloister, and certain portions of the South Transept have just been restored by Mr. Pearson, but the front of the South Transept is far less elegant than that of the northern one. There is no entrance porch, the space between the four huge buttresses being occupied by the Chapel of St. Blaise, but recently thrown open. The great rose window is far more intricate than that in the North Transept. The old window, which Sir Christopher mentions as having been "well rebuilt" forty years before the date of his report to Bishop Atterbury, had become



THE NIGHTINGALE TOMB IN THE NORTH TRANSEPT



THE TOMB OF AYMER DE VALENCE

Westminster Abbey.



THE NAVE LOOKING EAST. SHEWING BLORE'S SCREEN AND THE NAVE PULPIT.

so ruinous as to be dangerous. Dean Vincent and the Chapter therefore gave orders for its restoration, and the present window was constructed under the superintendence of Benjamin Wyatt, by Gayfere, on whose ability it certainly reflects great credit. One word upon the Cloisters, where every "Architectural" youngster has sat and dreamed the dream of the days when *he* should follow Pearson and be called upon to restore the hallowed spot. The southern arm, which is illustrated here, is erected against the old Refectory. At the west end—at the point where our view is taken—is the chief entrance from Dean's Yard. On two of the keystones of the vaulting is

just decipherable the initials N. L., for Nicholas Litlington, and a shield sculptured with his arms.

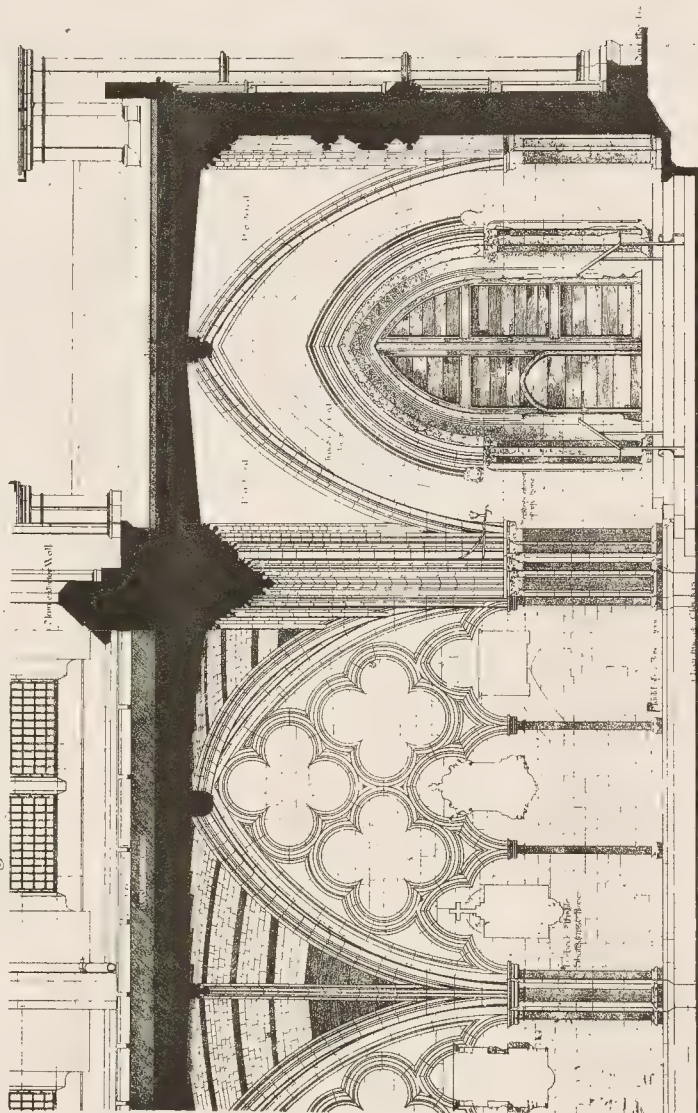
The East Cloister is the most irregular, though the most elaborate in its sculpture. It has eight divisions on the east side and six on the west, not any two of which are precisely similar. The five arches towards the north are very massive, as they support the western wall of the South Transept, in which it will be remembered the Cloister takes the place of what otherwise should have been an Eastern Aisle. From this Cloister are the entrances to the Chapter House, the Chapel of the Pyx, and the Little Cloisters.



THE SOUTH WALK OF GIONTFER.

Westminster Abbey

Two Eastern Bays; North Walk of Cloisters;



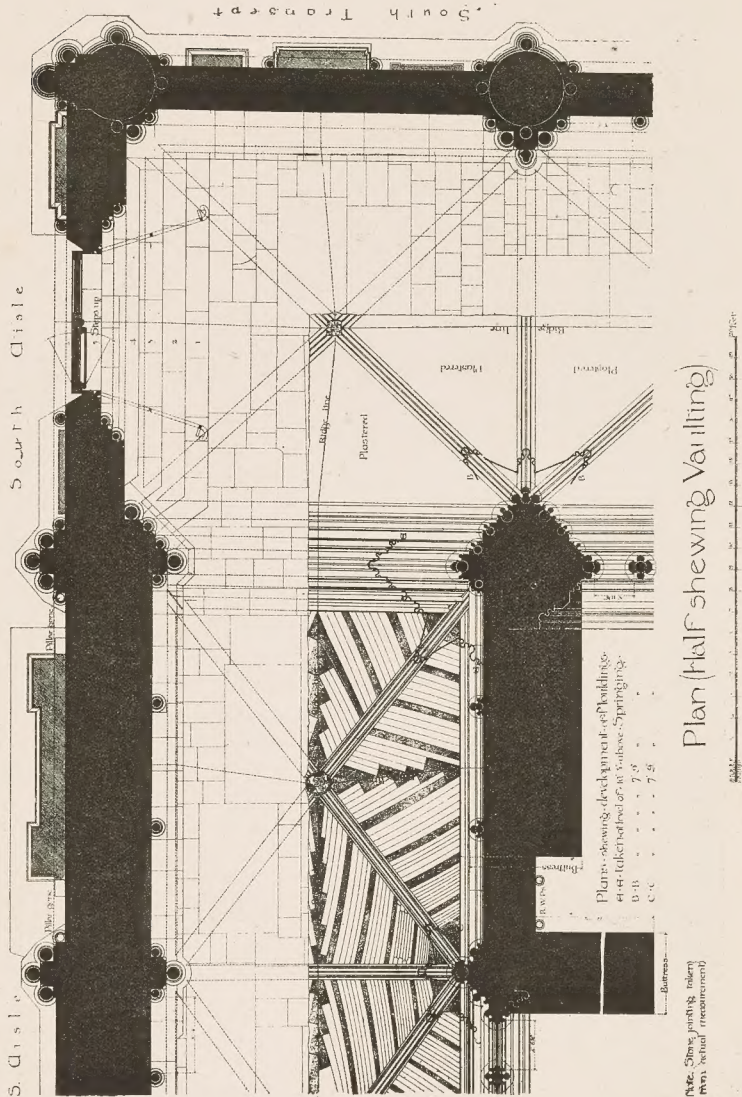
Longitudinal Section looking North

Scale: 1/4 inch = 1 foot
 1/2 inch = 2 feet
 3/4 inch = 3 feet
 1 inch = 4 feet

MEASURED AND DRAWN BY T. MCLAREN.

Westminster Abbey

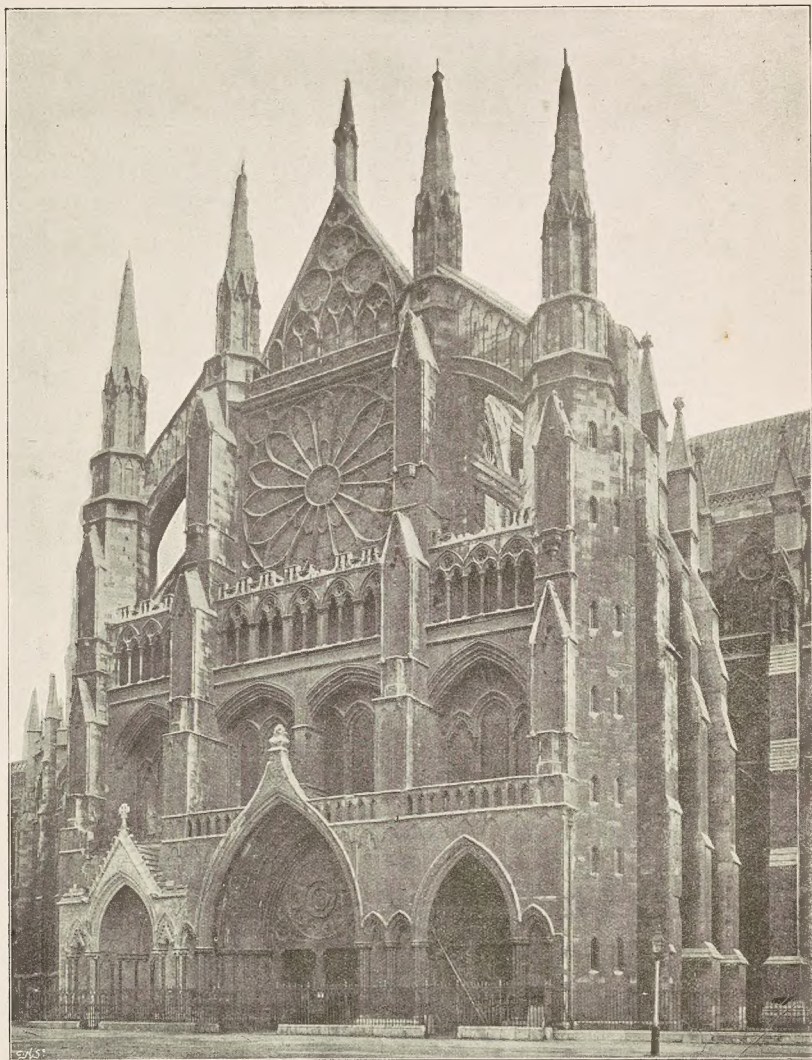
:Two Eastern Bays:North Walk of Cloisters:



Note: Stone, joining, taken
from actual measurement

MEASURED AND DRAWN BY T. MC LAREN.

Westminster Abbey.



THE NORTH TRANSEPT, BEFORE SIR GILBERT SCOTT'S RESTORATION.

From the North Cloister are the two doors into the South Aisle of the Nave of the Church, one of which, including the bay in which it stands, is detailed in Mr. McLaren's measured drawings.

Not always has Saint Peter's Abbey of Westminster been well cared for. Neglect was its portion in the godless years of the eighteenth century, and the boys of Westminster School were allowed to skip from tomb to tomb in the Confessor's Chapel. The

vergers, too, whiled away the tedious hours of their office by playing football, and the whole length of the building, from Poets' Corner to the western doors, was a public thoroughfare. A Chapter order of May 6th, 1710, mentions the "Appointment of a constable to restrain divers disorderly beggars daily walking and begging in the Abbey and Cloisters, and many idle boys daily coming into the Cloisters, who there play at cards and other plays for money, and

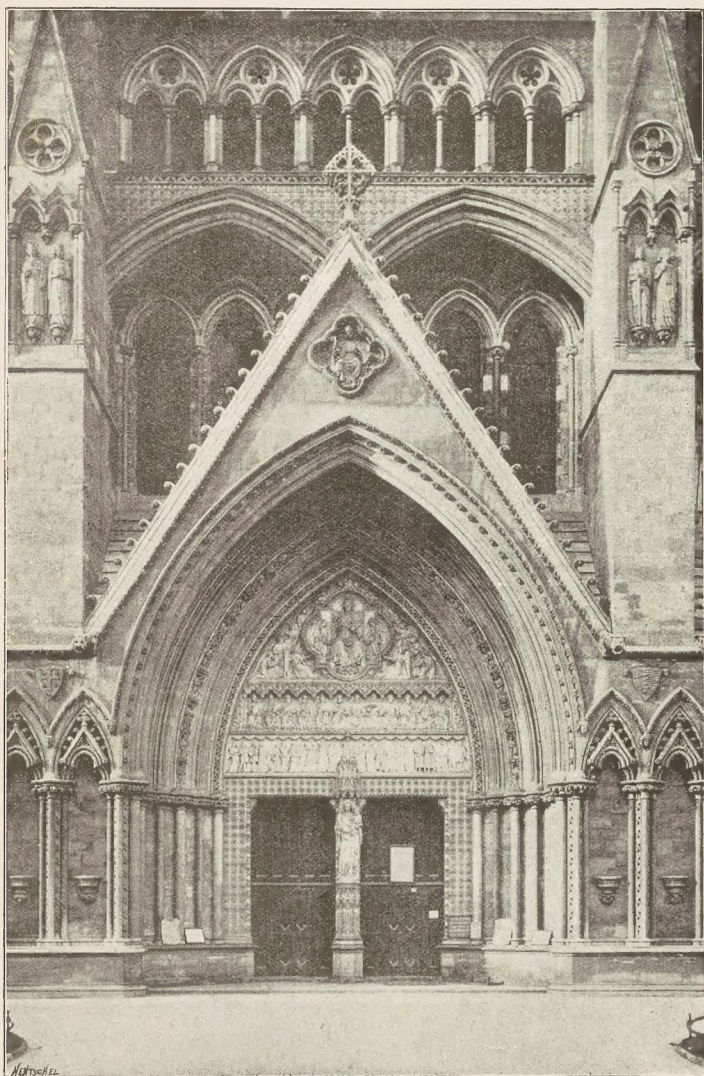
Westminster Abbey.

are often heard to curse and swear." One of the Minor Canons, who preached most often on Sundays, made it by week-days a pot-house. He sat in one of the Royal Chapels, with a tankard of ale beside him, in receipt of threepences from the curious visitors to that portion of the Church.

The statues in the tabernacles that decorate the exterior of Henry the Seventh's Chapel were taken

down, lest they should fall on Members of Parliament who passed by to St. Stephen's.

And yet, while these barbarisms were being perpetrated by those to which the Abbey should have been the most precious charge, a tender feeling for this historic fane was springing up among the lieges in general. Even so far back as the times of Elizabeth and James the First, distinguished



DETAILS OF THE NORTH PORCH: RESTORED BY SIR GILBERT SCOTT.

Westminster Abbey.

foreigners visiting these shores were taken "in gondolas along the Thames to the beautiful and large Royal Church called Westminster," to see "the Chapel built eighty years ago by King Henry the Seventh, the Royal Tombs, and the Coronation Stone." Even then "guide books to the monuments" were printed, and sold by the vergers.

In Horace Walpole the generally despised Gothic taste found a patron in days when it sorely needed one. "I love Westminster Abbey," he writes, "much more than levées and circles, and—no treason, I hope—am fond enough of Kings as soon as they have a canopy of stone over them." He prevented the destruction of the beautiful tomb of Aymer de Valence, when the Dean and Chapter had actually consented to its removal in order to raise in its stead a monument to "the little red-haired Corporal," General Wolfe. He could not prevent the Architecture of the Abbey being stultified by the gigantic Classical monuments of those great seamen, Earl Howe, Blake, and Dundonald. It is curious that Nelson, who fell with the aspiration "Westminster Abbey, or a glorious victory," is buried in St. Paul's.

"Here," continues Walpole, with that fine Architectural taste for which he was remarkable, "one thinks not of the builder; the religion of the place makes the first impression, and, though stripped of its shrines and altars, it is nearer converting one to Popery than all the regular pageantry of Roman

domes. One must have taste to appreciate the beauties of Grecian Architecture; one only wants passion to feel Gothic."

One thing we can never be sufficiently thankful for. The Abbey seems to have entirely escaped the whitewash brush that, immediately Gothic had fallen into disuse, seems to have daubed almost every public building in Europe. This is the one religious building in the kingdom that stands in its original finishing, with the proper hues of its stones displaying themselves, mellowed only by time.

Westminster Abbey is the fortress of the Church of England, the Dean and Chapter its garrison. While it stands the Church remains, and, although we know not what the future has in store for it, surely never again will the desecrations that befell in the past centuries be permitted to recur in those yet to come.

And here we end the story of Westminster. If elsewhere greater magnificence, and tales more softly told impress us, our heart remains where it learned those lessons not easy to forget.

The "long-drawn Aisle and fretted vault" of Westminster have mothered the sorrows of a thousand years. Upon *her* bosom men have forgotten the stress of life—the greed, the sickening disloyalty of it. And yet amidst it all, within the influence of the Abbey's grace, how near we reach the everlasting love and peace of God.

